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Sive Minutes to Madalyn: Why do you have a lantern?

Calliope

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Calliope

Spring 2009

Volume VIII

•
| Five Minutes to Madalyn

WHY DO YOU HAVE A LANTERN?

Calliope

Five Minutes to Madalyn
WHY DO YOU HAVE A LANTERN?

A Letter from the Editor:

Dear Reader,

The editorial and design staff is pleased to present this year's edition of *Calliope*. Not unlike previous years, this year's *Calliope* reflects the creativity and artistic expression of Pacific's finest writers and artists, as well as many hours of editing and careful selection by *Calliope*'s meticulous and demanding staff. Still, without those who bravely submitted their work for the initial reviewing process or the contributions from our generous sponsors, this magazine would not be possible.

After much discussion, the staff came up with the title *Five Minutes to Madalyn: Why Do You Have a Lantern?* for this year's edition of the magazine. Like any good work of art, the literary and visual submissions were filled with tension in numerous forms: the tensions felt between two people, the mental tensions associated with war, and the inner conflicts that reside in each of us. From this general theme the idea of a lantern surfaced as a metaphor to indicate that dark moments ultimately give way to the brighter flame of self-knowing and personal revelation.

Ultimately, each piece that we received represented a "truth" stemming from the unique experiences of each writer and artist. For selections that were not included in this year's edition, we would like to thank you for submitting a portion of your own truths for our review. To those who see their pieces here, the editorial and design staff extends a humble thank you for trusting us with the integrity of your work and the truths they contain.

— The Literary Team

Calliope

Five Minutes to Madalyn:

Why Do You Have a lantern?

Spring 2009 — VIII

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Special Thanks

Dan Kasser for helping us set up the studio for documenting the artwork.

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Linocut #3/4
Mongoose

They Did Not Write: A Collaboration

— Creativity and Knowledge Sophomore Seminar

They did not write because they ate too much.
They did not write because they had too many children.
Or because they had a field, or a street, or ten streets.
Or because someone threw rocks through
 their windows.
Then the son gambled his life away and they did
 not write
because they couldn't breathe outside Chinatown.

They did not write for the same reason I do not write.

Because winter was in the mind.
Because they were warriors and mothers.
Because they were busy conquering the Highlands.
Because they had left everything behind, most of all
 their words.
Because their pens spoke only Gaelic.
Because they were wrong and only winners
 write history.

And all that time the children kept crying for food,
and the rent had to be paid and the textbooks had to
 be bought,
and someone would have to clean their uniforms.
And where was the time?

They did not write because they would write later.
They did not write because no one would read them.

Now the books are burning, the houses are burning,
the trees, fields, friends, and families
do not write because they are in prison,

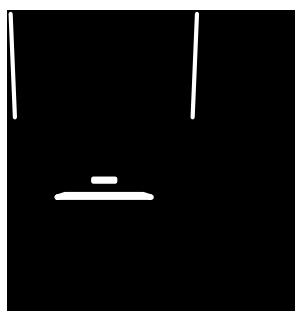
and what room is there in prison to compose
and how many voices are there, crying?

Oh, you people of the nation.
Oh, you people under the black umbrella.
It seems a gloom has come,
a gloom, fully mysterious, but yet familiar.
And how many voices are singing
and how many children are crying,
mothers and sisters,
mirrors of past and present
cycling through time?

They said they never gave it a thought.
They said they were afraid to take the leap,
frozen by fear of critique.
Their lives remained a dream,
a vision seen through a window,
a shade, a spirit, a landscape streaming past.
All their words became a pristine silence.
This is why they did not write.

What use is paper, these useless scratchings?
They were ashamed of misspelling their own names.

This is why they did not write:
Because they did not know how.
Because they had not been taught.
Because they were cooking.
Because they were eating.
Because they were told it was no good.



Because they were afraid.

Because they didn't dare.

They did not write because it was not right.

They thought it wasn't right and so they did not write.

But if they had been able to write,

this is what they would've written:

It is our God-forsaken right.



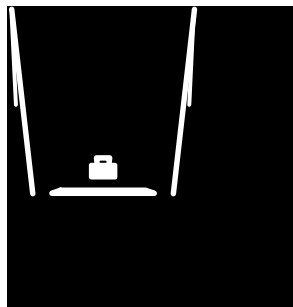
Written collaboratively by Professor Camille Norton's
Honors Creativity and Knowledge Sophomore Seminar,
Fall 2008, University of the Pacific

Authors: David Allen, Margarita Amine, Amy Au,
Arbie Jeke Campuspos, Tyler Chuang, Catherine Fung,
Gloria Gunn, Michelle Kim, Doo Lim, and
Courtney Mims



Waves

Heather McCoy



Angst in Grass

— Michiko “Misha” Maggi

The green grass grows,
And the green grass grows.
Green growing.
Going—
Straight to my heart.

Grass surrounding me,
Rounding me,
Millions of grass blades
Digging deep into clothes.

Helmet on head,
Gun in my hand.
Ready?
I am.
Give Command!

Green grass of foreign grounds
Grow wearily.
Painfully.

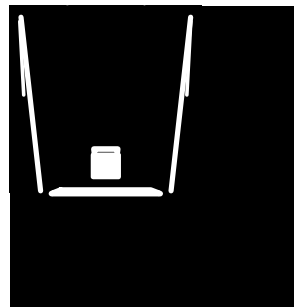
Can't see!
Can't see!

Enemy!

I'm biting my lip,
about to slip.

Just dying to die—
Where the green grass grows.

Fairytale
Glynnis Koike





Dying Wish
Gabriela Aschenberger

Angel: For Shane

— **Sara Stookey**

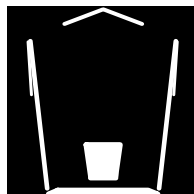
An angel walks across my chest.
Peering at me as I rest.
I dare my eyes to shudder shut,
To focus on anything, anything but...

Guilted into a sense of serene,
Mine eyes, a deep red with green,
Hide my thoughts from impending night
To focus on the angel's brilliant light.

Just beyond the angel sweeps,
Like water flow from caverns deep,
Some kind and distant memories.
They touch like waves stroke the seas.

No more will I see his sad young face,
So full of beauty, so full of grace.
His world of clear and stunning light
Vanished when his soul left in flight.

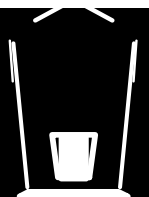
One angel walks across my mind,
The rest? They stop and fall behind.
I am saddened by his muddy eyes,
They whisper taunting lullabies.



Locked
Audrey Puah



Life's Obstacles
Yolanda Cunningham



You Have a Gun, She Has the Key

— Kent Linthicum

“IF YOU GAVE ME THE CHANCE I would stab him again. That sounds cold, but it had to be done. I know I’m off topic, but I just want everyone to understand that. So, yeah, I was sitting in class, Geology 110, on Wednesday, same seat and everything. Our professor is gone for a few days on fieldwork. That means that we get to watch a documentary of some kind. One of the other professors in the department comes in and gets out the DVD and pops it into the computer. Some old DVD boots and the title is revealed: *An Inconvenient Truth*. I had seen it before, but was excited to have the opportunity to look at it again. The guy behind me though wasn’t so happy. He made a big show of sighing. That was when my blood started to boil.

The film started up, Mr. Gore’s opening monologue and everything. And the guy behind me started up again. He said:

‘This is offensive. I shouldn’t have to sit here and watch this. Global warming is a myth, there’s no consensus in the scientific community. This is just propaganda that’s going to turn us into some tree-hugging country that hates God. I don’t have to sit here and—’

At that moment I started to turn around. I was going to respond with fact and logic. By this point the entire class was staring at him. Soon they would be staring at me too. Didn’t matter though, I had the

perfect words and I was going to use them. Then, still turning, I saw his face. He might have been attractive on any other day, probably to another girl, but not today. His face was scrunched up in a sneer and spittle flew from his mouth along with his indignant words. There would be no words that would persuade him, his very mental existence was predicated on resisting change. That’s when I realized that my words would be futile.

So, I snatch my pencil with my hand; remember, I’m still turning around. My pencil is a little black mechanical Bic with a broken clip. Nothing special, but I knew it would do. My fist squeezes the pencil forward in my hand, so as much of the point and barrel are exposed. He, knowing the class is paying attention to him, is still flapping his jaw, although his sneer has become smug.

I don’t think he even really realized what was happening as my hand flew through the air. Didn’t matter; I put all of my energy into the point of that pencil. With all of my effort I drove it as deeply as I could into his neck. I expected more resistance, but the skin was as soft as warm butter before the tip of the black Bic.

At the time I didn’t think about it, but now I am glad that I penetrated all the way to his esophagus. He died quickly, drowning in his own blood, instead of having to bleed out. I had blood on my hand, but it

did not seem so thick to me. I suppose that I wouldn't make a good Lady Macbeth. There was nothing but chaos in the classroom as Al Gore's voice calmly told about the challenges facing humanity if we are to survive the next hundred years. I left the classroom. No one stopped me.

Now, here's the part that I would like to emphasize: I did not walk outside and hug a tree or throw my clothes off and run into the forest. That's not what this is about. This is about the survival of humanity. I made a utilitarian choice: that numb-fuck was one of many who are dragging us down. It was either they change or we die; we all die. I want my children to have the chance at life and he was standing in the way of that chance."

There was stunned silence in the courtroom. Joan watched the court from the witness stand. She guessed that there would be good odds that the next twenty to thirty years of her life would be spent in a jail. That wasn't so bad though because at least she would be able to read and at the same time contribute less carbon to the atmosphere.

"So, Miss Tellus," the judge looked past his glasses at her, "is this why you are claiming this action was self-defense?"

"Yes."

"Don't you think that maybe you could have persuaded him to change his mind?" As the judge asked his voice inflected with a pleading note, a hope that she would give him something to lessen her sentence. Nobody wanted to try a student from the

Dean's List and a volunteer for the local homeless shelter for first-degree murder.

"You are assuming that he could change his mind, your Honor, and I say that he was not able. In other words he was not fit to make decisions regarding the future of humanity—"

"How can you decide that?" The judge interrupted, leaning over the stand from the bench.

"The evidence is overwhelming," Joan said. The judge cocked an eyebrow. Joan continued: "Look, I am not saying that I should not face the consequences, only that they be lessened because this was a case of self-defense. I killed a young man. That is wrong. But let us pretend the situation was different, just for a moment. Let's say you were standing outside of a fallout shelter. In the air above you can hear the wail of a nuclear bomb as it drops. Unfortunately, outside the shelter there is a young woman, saying she does not hear a bomb and will not let you in because there is no reason for you to enter the shelter. You have a gun, she has the key. Would you kill her? I know I would. The only difference between this situation and that one is time. The sirens have been sounded, I can hear the wail of the bomb, so can you, and the evidence is concrete and visible all over the world. I want to get into the shelter and he was holding the key. He was going to kill me and my children and everyone else in this room and their children and their children's children just because he refused to hear the wail of the bomb as it fell. I don't want to die. So I acted."



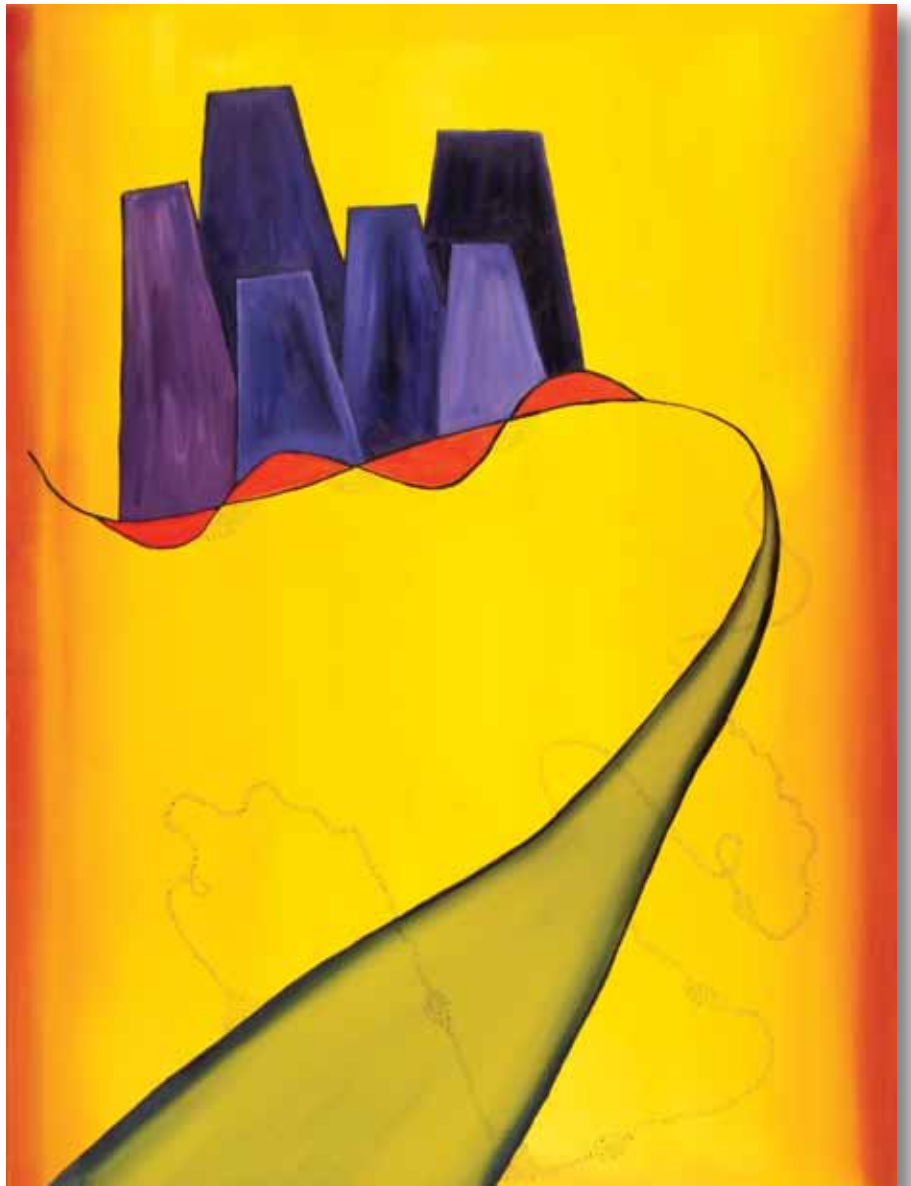
There was an even longer silence in the courtroom.

“Well, not an easy decision you have given me, Miss Tellus. Your lawyer has presented ample evidence in favor of radical changes in the climate. And your statement is quite persuasive. I agree we must act, but not in the manner that you did . . . You will be sentenced to the maximum penalty for first-degree murder.” The gavel fell and the judge rose to leave.

Outside the chamber the judge paused. There was a window in the corridor that had a particularly spectacular view of the city. But as he approached the window, he noticed something was wrong: the window was vibrating. He touched it and his teeth buzzed. Still curious, the judge placed his ear to the window. As soon as he had made contact with the glass he pulled away. It did not matter though, because he heard it in the glass and all around: the wailing and falling.



Path to a Place Above
Jessica Herrera





Octopodi
Ruth McMaster

Light Pollution

— **Becca Parker**

I wanted to see the stars once.
My dad and I took the freeway
Drove up a hill on the outskirts
To the gates of the women's prison
And a little further on

Where we were high enough
Above the glitter-dust
The orange haze of electricity:
Light-pollution, my dad said—

As if the light lingered
Infecting the vision of the valley,
Choking the eyes of the people below;
A light-blindfold
Pressed against the silicon-flecked eyes
Of San Jose.

Only there we were high enough
For the darkness to glorify the expanse
Of the Milky Way: celestial silver river of light.
We took photographs, but
There was still orange seeping in the corners





Root of the Rock
Christine Strain



Lodi Cinema
Luis Gonzales



Foreclosure

— **Cassie A. Peters**

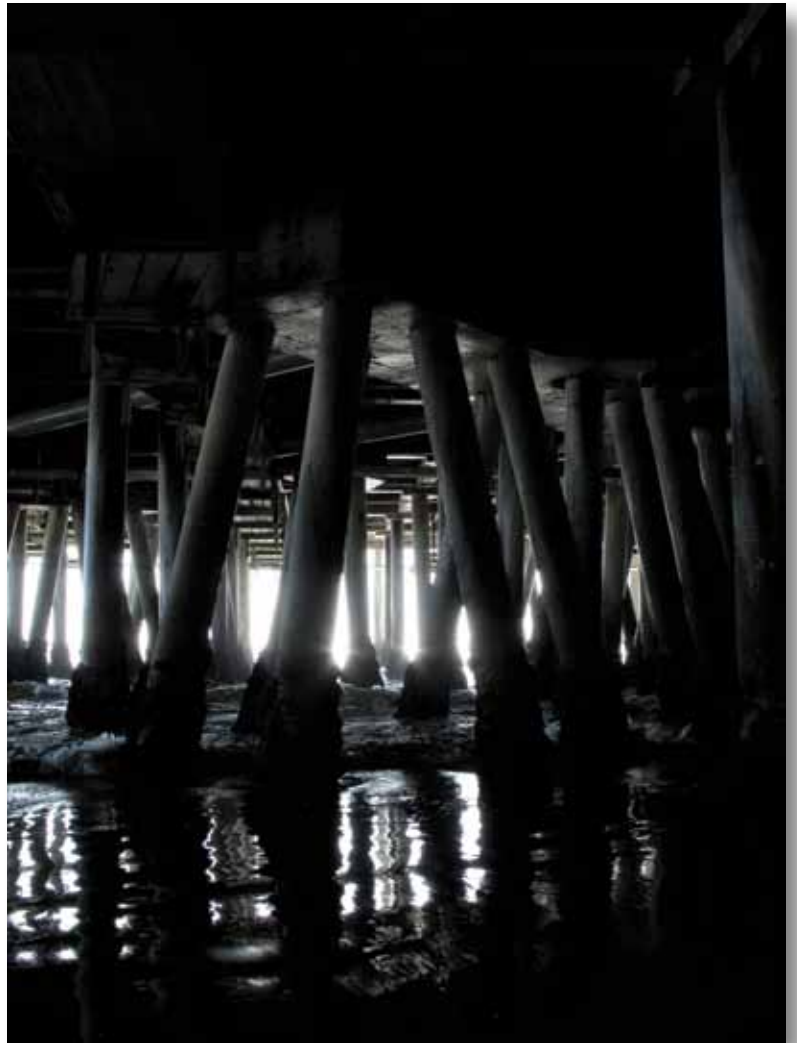
When I drive back it is late at night.
I do not brake at the red stoplights.
I drive down this street so often
that I know they will turn green
before I reach them.

I barely see the deli to my left,
a quaint little shop
in the rough part of town
an Eden in the mayhem:
black and white checkered tile,
a counter with stools stacked upside down.

I keep thinking maybe
someday I will drive back
in the daylight instead of the darkness,
sit at that counter when the stools are down
eat some ice cream, order a coffee.

How many times did I drive by
late at night before I noticed
the “for lease” sign in the window?

Little Eden I never knew you.
Little Eden come back.



And I Went Towards the Light
Michiko “Misha” Maggi



The Girls of Summer

— Ann Mazzaferro

THERE IS A PART OF ME THAT IS INCOMPLETE

when it isn't summer. I can't help it, and I stopped trying to deny it years ago. For me, autumn has always been poignant and searing, a time to remember the transitory nature of life, a time to remember what we've lost. Winter has always rung false, with its jingling bells and forced smiles and the pressure to express goodwill to all mankind, dammit, because it's Christmas and that's what we're supposed to do. Besides, I've always hated the rain, and the cold, and the shapeless sweaters and bulky coats that make me feel as attractive as a stack of balding tires. And don't even get me started on spring. The pastel eggs, the gentle showers that feel like a cat spitting on you, the weather that can't make up its mind—all of it stands in the way of what I really want, and what I really want is summer.

I've been like this since I was a child in Southern California. To begin with, who can resist the lure of a summer vacation, that three month long stretch of freedom to do whatever one pleases? The memories of those early years are as brightly colored as the Popsicles that stained my tongue with lurid shades of orange, red, and purple. The air conditioner figures prominently into many of those memories, as they probably do for most Southern Californians. I loved the cool, crisp air drifting around me as I lay as still as possible, willing myself not to sweat, savoring the cold as my eyes were glued to the pages of "Little Women" or "Gone With the Wind."

Road trips take up a huge part of my mental landscape as well. My mom, my sister and I would pile into the teal blue minivan and race up the highway, a fish of a car, zooming against the traffic and the flashing lights, always on an adventure. One road trip took us up the El Camino Real, that long dusty stretch of road that connects all twenty-three of the California missions. For two weeks, my life was lived in sacred, crumbling adobe buildings and the sterile, convenient hotels that had cropped up nearby. More often than not, part of summer was spent at my grandmother's house in Mokelumne Hill, where the long days were spent gamboling like young colts through the seemingly endless pasture (in reality, only two acres), scraping my knees climbing the old walnut tree with its ground-sweeping branches, or learning how to fish in the nearby creek and eating the bounty later that night.

All of these memories drift through my mind, but no memory of my summers would be complete without the pool. It wasn't a very big pool, nor was it deeper than six feet, but it was the epicenter of my childhood summers, and even now the smell of chlorine makes me giddy. Surrounded by iron bars that were choked with vines, the pool was in the center of my housing complex. Oddly enough for Southern California, the pool was usually deserted during the day and well into the evening, giving my family and I free reign over its watery depths.

When I speak of my family, I don't just mean my mom, sister and I (again, Dad was always gone, especially after the divorce). No, my family was much larger than that, forged by ties stronger than blood or a common name. It was (and still is) multi-generational, multi-lingual, and as unconventional as it was nurturing and loving.

There were my two mothers, to begin with—I always thought of ours as a matriarchal tribe. My mom, Kathy, was always the spotlight of the event, throwing the beam of her smile wildly around the slippery patio of a stage. I have no memory of those summers that isn't accompanied by the roar of her laugh. An explosion of sound, it would bounce around the starry darkness, occasionally reaching pitches that prompted local dogs to reply with frenzied barking. Surrounded by music, my mother never stopped us kids from singing, dancing, or story-telling, giving those days an air of freedom and self-expression that lasted long after our tans had faded away.

My other mother had an equally profound impact on those summer days, and on the rest of my life. Trudy, my mother's best friend and mother to my own best friend, was from Germany, and she still speaks with a lilting accent that makes everything seem exotic or profound. She adored to cook, and knew everything there was to know about food and wine. While most families were grilling hamburgers or steaks on adjacent barbecues, Trudy would commandeer the pit under a trellis of wisteria and begin to release her own brand of magic. I knew how to properly crack a crab, shuck an oyster and open a bottle of wine (which I didn't drink) before I was ten,

and began to dream of collecting my own endless supply of white linen table cloths and wineglasses before I hit puberty.

It was a heady way to spend a summer, but it is to both of my mother's credit that we children never grew blasé, or bored, or took it for granted. We were just as happy and grateful munching on Del Taco from down the street as we were eating duck and risotto. Neither of my families were incredibly wealthy, and our housing community was an un-gated complex not far from the university in town. But the women in my family knew how to save, and how to hold things in reserve, and they knew when to let themselves go.

While our parents dominated the patio and hot tub, my sisters and I considered the pool itself our own private world, regardless of who else was in it. As with my two mothers, I have two sisters from two different families, but both as beloved as though the same blood ran through our veins. Amy, my little sister by birthright, was all dimples and frowns. Her eyes could size up how much trouble she could get into versus how much fun the undertaking might prove faster than her little legs could move. Monique was Trudy's daughter, and my best friend since our first day together in kindergarten. She was always tall, and it always seemed that our bodies were in competition to see who might reach six feet first. Together, the three of us would throw our bodies into the pool with unabashed glee, splashing and diving with heedless abandon. We would swim and dive until we wore the skin off of the bottom of our toes, requiring Barbie bandages as we limped home at the day's end.



Those waters were where we shared our deepest secrets (usually which boys we liked and which ones were gross) and dreams (to be an actress for me, a writer for Monique, princess of the world for Amy), and where we made our pinkie swears and developed our own highly coded language that shielded us from outside ears. Our pursuits were not without their earthier qualities. As children, we picked up on our parent's rather colorful vocabularies, and our language was peppered with German profanities from Trudy before we even could fully understand their implications in English. Once, Trudy's mother was visiting from Germany, and all of us were playing cards at one of the round, pebbled glass tables that bordered the pool. After a particularly bad hand, my eight year old sister slapped her cards on the table and gasped "Schisse!", which means "excrement" in German. The poor old woman nearly fell off of her chair and pointed her toes to heaven, shocked to hear such oaths being lisped by a second grader.

That pool was my second home—I was in love with its azure depths, insisting on plunging in regardless of the weather. When winter rolled in and smothered the sun with clouds, my parents would take us to the hot tub to defrost from the mid-sixty degree chill. Amused and slightly confused, they would watch as I insisted on diving into the legitimately chilly pool, masking my chattering teeth with a bright grin. Try as I might, I could never recapture the magic of summer in those waters. It was as if I believed the chlorine would release a chemical reaction that would transport me back to my summer self, the water sprite that I believed was truly me. Even though no

such magic happened, I kept diving, believing that I would stumble upon the magic the same way I might stumble upon a lost penny. It would require a sharp eye, keen timing, and sheer dumb luck. After my parents divorced when I was eleven, my mother and sister and I moved to Northern California, where there was no public swimming pool for miles; I was terrified that the magic would be gone forever.

It's only now, of course, that I realize the pool itself wasn't magical. The people who surrounded it, however, were. The women who enfolded my summers taught me how to dream, to seek adventure, to dance, to live in the moment. I didn't realize it at the time, but those childhood summers by the pool created a strong pattern that has carried through the rest of my life. Though I've had many important relationships (romantic and otherwise) with men in my life and cherish my male friends deeply, I have always known that it is the bonds of friendship that women share with other women that are among the most important any woman can have. Even now, as I work through my summers instead of swimming through them, I find myself with a core of strong, vibrant sisters by summer's end, without even realizing that I've been seeking it.

I still return to that pool to this day. Once every summer, my family and I pile into the car (a silver PT Cruiser having long since replaced the teal minivan) and trundle down the highway to Southern California from the family abode in Northern California. We stay with Trudy and Monique and the rest of their family for a week, spending half of it adrift in that very same pool. Of course, Monique and Amy and I

aren't children anymore, and we spend a fair amount of time stretched out on towels sunning ourselves rather than swimming. We're old enough to drink with our mothers now, and they are no longer impervious to change or mortality. Trudy's blonde hair is artfully graying, and my mother possesses a full head of silver.

But the music remains. The laughter remains. I take that week and save it, holding it in reserve through the sad autumns and freezing winters and banal springs until summer comes around again.

Until I can let myself go.

©



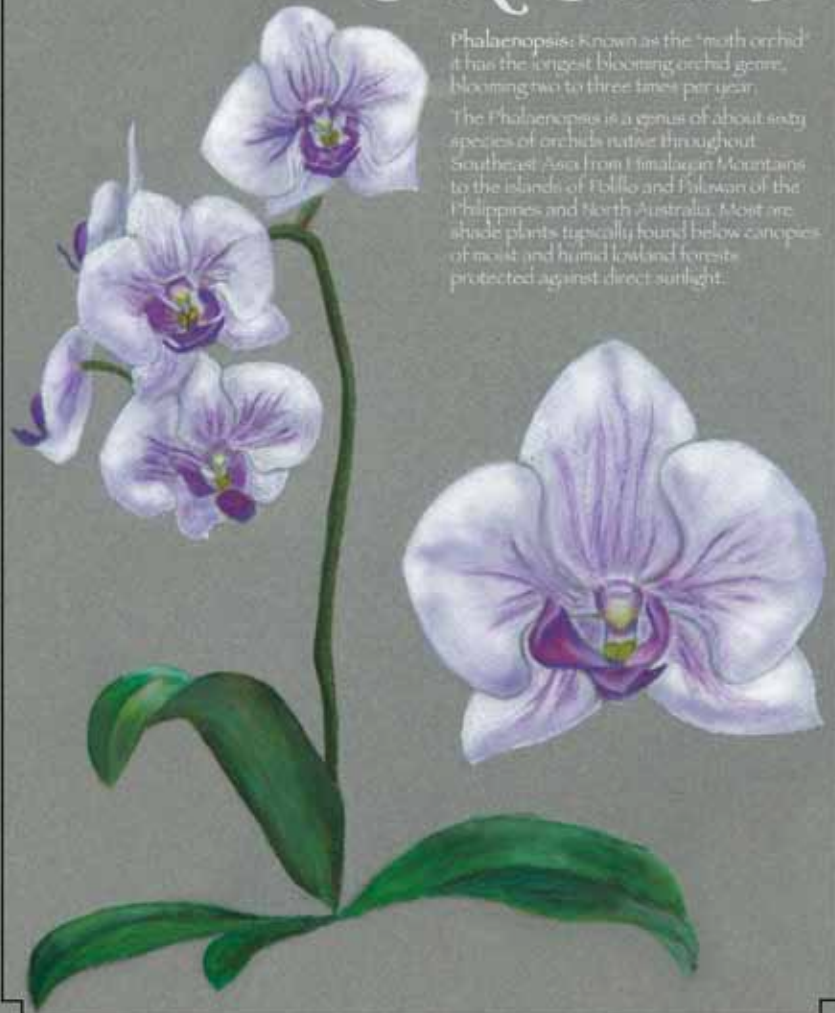


Self Portrait
April Ledbetter

ORCHID

Phalaenopsis, known as the "moth orchid," it has the longest blooming orchid genre, blooming two to three times per year.

The Phalaenopsis is a genus of about sixty species of orchids native throughout Southeast Asia from Himalayan Mountains to the islands of Iboilo and Palawan of the Philippines and North Australia. Most are shade plants typically found below canopies of moist and humid lowland forests protected against direct sunlight.



Orchid

Sarah Gutierrez



The Women in My Family

— Christine Le

They didn't dare bleed before marriage,
I could tell by the pinkness
that lingered in their cheeks,
as if the Eastern sun had set in them.

They've stopped being virgins
yet their heads loiter in innocence.
They dream of becoming orchids
someday, the white kind
closing its petals
only to be plucked by a child wise
enough to have never loitered in innocence.

You can tell they don't dare to give head,
their mouths and minds aren't made for such labor.
Instead, these creatures lie soundless and still,
being the orchid with its long, lazy leaves spread.



NO TO H8

Michiko "Misha" Maggi





Self Portrait
Anastasya Uskova

Numbers

— Tyler Mullen

My mother gives me a 7 as a son,
says I have plenty of time to be a ten, not quite
there yet,
My father gave me a 8 as an athlete, didn't quite meet
his expectations.
My brother gives me a 9 as a friend,
I wonder what I'd get as a brother?
Some friends give me a 10, say I can always make
them laugh
Some say I'm like their brother.
Some lie, I think a few want to give me a 5
Five fingered salute clinched tightly, across the face
My teachers vary,
Some give me 8's, others 6, I haven't got a 4 yet,
maybe I'm doing something right
The absence of fear to tell me what they think, I strive
to be 1 one day.
My lover gives me a 9.5 as a lover, doesn't believe
in perfect
Nothing really is.
My lover gives me a 9.5 as her best friend
and a 7 for annoying her when we're mad.
I am her number 2, after her sister
As she is mine after my brother.
Maybe one day I'll get that ten from my mother.



Rock n' Roll Suicide
David Mayman





Impression of Fear
Christine Strain



Alone in a Crowd

— Alexander Poirier

Alone in a Crowd

*Alone in a Crowd,
but we're still standing strong
with X'd up fists
and sing alongs.*

— Champion, "Promises Kept"

Straight Edge: a life style primarily focused on maintaining a pure body and conscience by abstaining from drugs and alcohol...

It's the summer of 1980. Hidden somewhere amidst the crumbling bricks and fading paint, the smog-drenched air that sticks to your lungs like taffy; somewhere in between the grey bricks and gaping mouths of the North Shore of San Francisco, California there stands a monument, bold and blushing against its hazy backdrop. Its thick, pink paint looks as if a bottle of Pepto Bismol was dripped over its walls to soothe the pains of spray-paint and the heartache of piss stains. Above a weather-beaten awning that protects the bouncer from getting too much sun on his beer-belly and glistening head hangs a sign that brings order to the decay in disgustingly clean white block letters. It reads simply: MABUHAY.

Inside, bodies are stacked like inventory in a storeroom: sweating, breathing, waiting—waiting for the whine of the P. A. and the screech of old strings to remind them why they woke up this morning. Outside, a boy from D. C., freshly unloaded from his

Greyhound bus stares down at his hand, at the peculiar X that now divides it. The fresh stink of permanent marker burns his nostrils.

The club is 21 and over and he's only 17. But he doesn't want to drink, he just wants to play the show and have fun. Back home this would have meant he was shit out of luck, kicked to the curb because the club served alcohol and he couldn't buy it. But here, this X on his hand said differently. It said he was not going to drink. It said he was free from the tyranny of alcohol. Little did the bouncer know that when he drew that X on that boy's hand, he would start a revolution that would come to define hundreds of thousands of people around the world.

Sometime during the next year of incessant touring, this boy would sit down and scribble in his notepad the words that would put a name to this revolution:

*I'm a person just like you
But I've got better things to do
Than sit around and fuck my head
Hang out with the living dead
Snort white shit up my nose
Pass out at the shows
I don't even think about speed
That's something I just don't need
I'VE GOT THE STRAIGHT EDGE.
— Ian Mackaye, "Straight Edge"*

Fast-forward to March 1st 2008. Mabuhay Gardens is long gone, so is The Pound and the Blackwater, Seifert Center and the F. O. E. I stand inside the crumbling 924 Gilman Street, one of the last legitimate punk venues in Northern California. It is the last day of the Rivalry Showcase, one of the premier hardcore-punk showcases on the West Coast. We are packed into that room very much like kids were that summer in 1980 at Mabuhay. On the dilapidated stage beneath the sagging rafters of 924 Gilman Street stands the Ian Mackaye of my generation, Aram Arslanian. His band, Betrayed, has decided to play a reunion tonight, probably my last chance to see one of the best straight edge bands in the world. It's been four years since I started drawing those X's on my fists. Since then, I've always been known as "the Straight Edge kid," for better or for worse.

I can't help but look around me as Aram starts what is sure to be one of many speeches of the night. From gutter punks with jean jackets and nose rings to tough guys in basketball shorts, from normal looking kids in band-tees to the sickening breed of "gangster hardcore kids" that developed somewhere in the suburbs of Sacramento County, the human landscape that surrounds me is as varied as the California coast. Close by, the fifteen or twenty straight edge kids are gathered around the stage listening intently to their idol, waiting to absorb every word the prophet spills from his pedestal.

But I find myself wondering why.

Why don't I drink? Why do I put up with the ridicule, the awkward looks and "no ways" when I tell

people I'll pass on the vodka/whiskey/rum. Why am I a "freak?" Even in my own subculture of hardcore, the one place I feel the most at home, I am alienated. No matter where I go, whether it's to a party or to a show, I am the kid that "doesn't drink," that "needs to lighten up" and "have a good time." Ian MacKaye explained his frustration with this alienation in an interview he gave in 1996:

In the real world, the big world, we were out there pissing them off because we were non-conformist punk rock kids. In the punk world, we were pissing them off because we were straight [edge] kids... I thought the punk world would embrace us.

But it didn't. Too many times, I've walked away from a show with busted knuckles or a swollen eye because some prick thought it would be funny to throw beer at the straight edge kids. Too many times, I've had to pry a friend off of some dumbass and get the fuck out of there before the cops came. Too many times, I've been backed into a corner with no way out but through "them"—and for what? For pride? For some sense of dignity? I was raised on the broken windows and bursting veins of alcoholism, so I know what "a few beers here and there" can do. But the fear of this monster from my childhood can't be my sole motivating force. It just can't.

Aram's words stir the crowd into frenzy as the guitars mark the beginning of Betrayed's first song. As a circle pit whirls behind me, tearing up the human landscape like a tornado and I watch the pile-ons begin, I recall every show I've ever been to, every line of lyrics



that I've screamed at the top of my lungs as I climbed desperately over the bodies of my peers to the mic on the stage. The lyrics and shows of The Gorilla Biscuits, Have Heart, Verse, Champion and more played through my head as this one played out before me.

When the song was over and the dust of whatever fight had started this time had settled, Aram embarked on yet another speech. This one, however, I could not ignore. The sweat dripped from the top of his biced head, between his thick-rimmed glasses and down his hooking beak of a nose as he began to tell the story of how he had helped a friend in need. Aram, you see, is a therapist who works with individuals who are rehabilitating from drug and alcohol addiction. When a man walked into the clinic one day, strung out on whatever his poison was, having lost everything and looking for help, Aram was there to get him through it. The man told him how his wife had left him and taken the kids, how he had lost his job and his house and his family because of his addiction. Aram listened and, over the next few months, helped this man break his addiction and slowly earn back everything he had lost. Then, one day, he didn't show up to his session. The next day, the police found him, hanging in his closet by a thin nylon chord.

Just when this man had begun to gain his life back, he slipped back into addiction. Seeing everything he had worked so hard for in the past few months fall to pieces once again, he couldn't face Aram or the rest of the world, so he ended his own life.

"Now, I didn't tell this story to scare you all away from drinking and smoking pot," he said, "some of

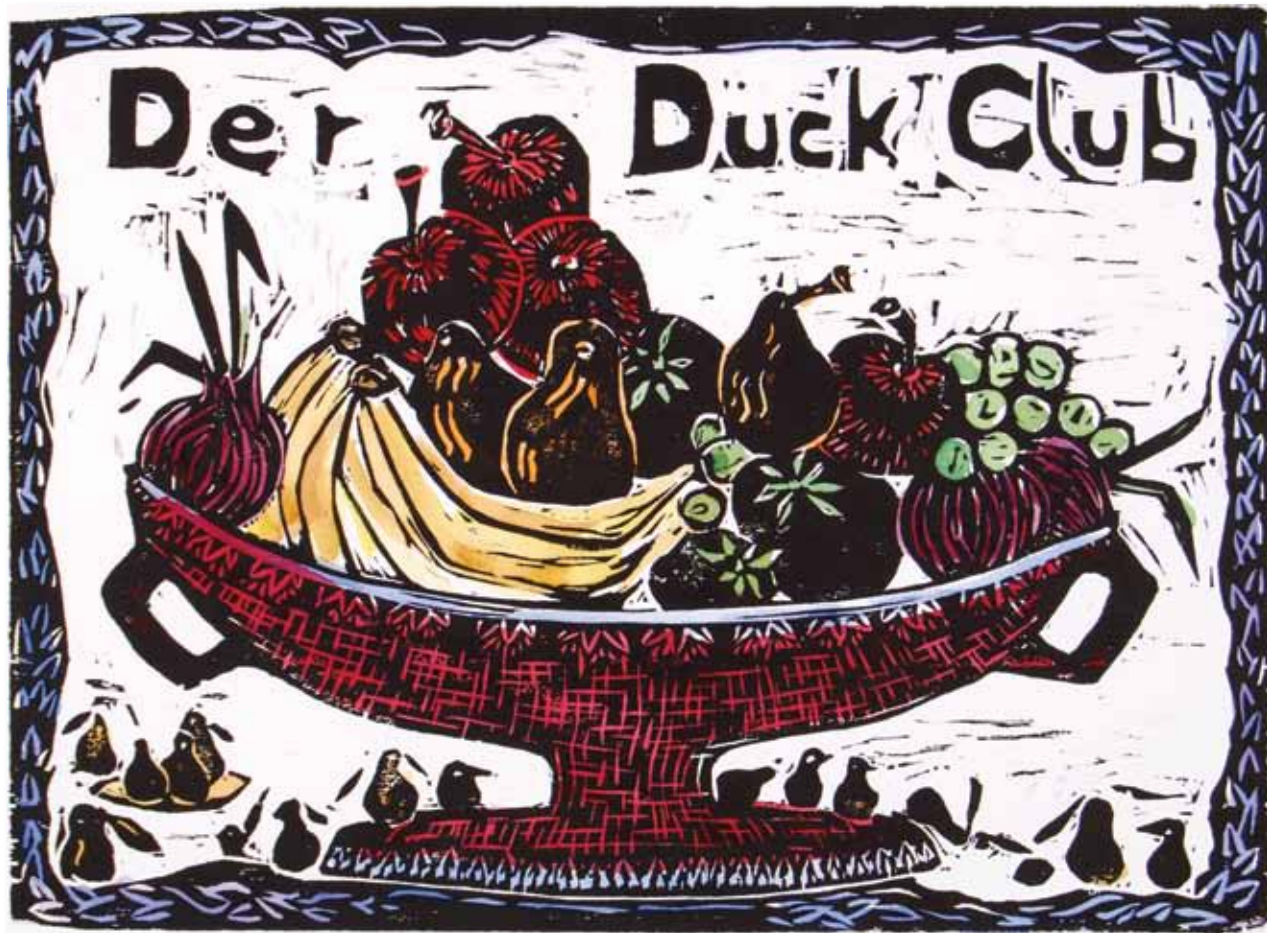
my best friends do. I told it to remind you to always remember the people you care about. In the end, they will be there and that bottle won't."

With this, Betrayed went on to play one of the best sets I have ever been a part of and I began to realize just why I put those X's on my fists. As I left 924 Gilman Street, sweatshirt in hand, sweat dripping down my face and went out into the cold Berkeley night air, I looked at my friends and thought of the times we've had: road trips across California, random nights wandering the streets after a show, 4 am skinny-dipping in Santa Barbara. I don't need to drink to have a good time. When it all comes down to it, even though I'm straight edge, "I'm a person, just like you. But I've got better things to do."



Closer
Jean Frost





8th Annual Duck Dinner
Ruth McMaster

Recipe (for Disaster)

— Bethany MacKenzie

“Cooking time should be about 5 minutes”

I read from the book when

I tried to cook for him

oh, but he didn’t see the value

no, he doesn’t get the soul

in ‘soul food’ and he doesn’t value

the ‘home’ in home-made

because his mother is lazy

and he doesn’t care

He eats food from a box,

reheated-fake-meat

his mother thinks it’s cruel

to eat a chicken or a cow

but doesn’t see the cruelty of raising

a son on

soggy-soy-patties,

instead of love.





Sweet Gelato
Madalyn Friedrich



Bottle Forms
Lauren Carter



La Habana, Cuba

— Ashley Elefant

THE CUBA-AMERICA JEWISH MISSION is a non-profit organization dedicated to assisting with the revitalization of Jewish life in Cuba and to working to improve the physical and spiritual well-being of the Jews of Cuba¹

• • •

“Bienvenidos a la Habana” the sign read as we exited the small Cubana airlines plane and entered the busy, humid airport.

After clearing passport control and receiving quite a few confused stares at our American passports, our next task was to claim our luggage. Ordinarily this would not have been much of a challenge: however, since we were also bringing in humanitarian medical supplies, our suitcase count was nearly double our head count and it felt like hours before all the bags finally arrived in front of us.

Once all the bags had been claimed and stacked neatly on four luggage carts, one per each member of our family, we continued on to the last of the numerous security check points. We made our way through the airport with my dad and brother leading the way and my mom following them closely; as usual, I was lagging a bit behind the rest of the group. When I reached the guard at the front of the line I handed him my ticket stub and prepared to cross through the glass doors separating us from the rest of the terminal, just as I had seen the rest of my family do before me.

With a pleasant smile on his face the man carefully examined the piece of paper I had handed him, and then proceeded to inspect the suitcase that lay face down on the metal cart. As he moved clumsily around the large blue and black duffle bag, I noticed his eyes narrow and his smile begin to fade. I silently slid an inch or two closer to him in an attempt to find out what had caught his attention when I noticed that my suitcase had been stamped with a large red “X”. I did not remember seeing this “X” on anyone else’s suitcase tag and I began to panic as I realized my whole family now stood waiting for me on the other side of the glass doors, unable to come back through to help me.

The man asked me in a thick accent if I could “come with him, por favor” as he escorted me and my bags over to a partitioned off area in the corner. While following him, I noticed his robotic movements and his large hand gun secured on his hip—both clear signs that this was definitely a trained military man and not a young boy working for minimum wage with TSA. As it turns out, I was the lucky member of our family who happened to grab the suitcase filled with inhalers (for asthma) and syringes (for diabetes patients), which apparently the Cuban government was not very happy about.

On the flight over my dad warned my brother and me that if we were to get stopped and questioned by airport security, then we should pretend not to speak Spanish. The logic, he said, was that if you act

as if you do not understand then they will ask fewer questions. He had been to Cuba five years ago, with the help of the same program, and had learned this lesson the hard way. Unaware of the strict and unusual security protocols, he ended up being detained for over three hours by camouflage-wearing security officers as he tried to explain that his GPS and satellite phone were just for safety and not some type of “top secret” American spy equipment.

So, even though I probably could have told them exactly what they wanted to know in perfect Spanish, I pretended not to understand a single word. I found this to be much easier said than done, however, especially when the two young male soldiers began to discuss under their breath all the dirty things they would love to do to “la gringa rubia” (the blonde American). Finally, after about fifteen minutes and ten questions to which I responded either “I don’t speak Spanish” or “I don’t understand”, they let me return to my family. Surprisingly, they let also me keep my suitcase full of inhalers and needles that had caused the whole dilemma in the first place.

After a slightly overdramatic reunion with my family, we piled into a cab and headed to our hotel. As we drove through the rain-soaked city I couldn’t help but notice Havana was unlike any metropolitan area I had ever seen. There were no McDonald’s drive-throughs, Abercrombie billboards, or Starbucks stores on every corner. Instead the landscape was full of crumbling buildings, signs that read *Viva Fidel 80 más* (Long live Fidel), and a wide array of gorgeous 1950’s classic American cars.

• • •

At 8 am the next morning my brother and I sat half awake on the couch in the lobby of our hotel, Melia Cohiba, as we waited patiently to meet our tour guide, Tatiana. Tatiana worked sometimes with the Cuba-America Jewish Mission and would be the one who would take us to deliver the medicine we had brought as well show us around Havana. Her “real job” was as an anesthesiologist in a local hospital; however, in the four days she spent playing our tour guide at the reasonable price of \$30 a day, she made the same amount of money that she made in four months at her job in the hospital.

“La familia Elefant?” asked a bright-eyed and smiling, middle-aged woman as she approached.

“Si. Mucho gusto,” my dad responded enthusiastically in a wannabe Mexican accent, giving my brother and me a slight chuckle.

We always found it funny when our dad acted as if he could speak Spanish when in reality his comprehension was quite limited and he could really only speak a few choice phrases such as “mucho gusto” (nice to meet you), “albondegas” (meatballs), and “donde esta la biblioteca?” (where is the library?).

Since our first stop of the day was at the apartment of Dr. Rosa Behar, a retired gastroenterologist who ran the pharmacy for the Jewish Community, my brother and I were forced to march back upstairs to our rooms to bring down the suitcases filled with medical supplies that were headed for the pharmacy. Our parents stayed



downstairs and chatted with Tatiana a little more, since—in keeping with Cuban law—she could not actually come upstairs with us. She later explained to us that according to their law, no Cubans are allowed to stay in hotels or even enter the room of a foreign guest. Their access to hotels is strictly limited to the lobby area.

Driving from our hotel to Rosa's apartment we were met with our first real glimpse of La Habana (Havana). As we drove through the downtown area I became aware of the large number of red, white, and blue flags hanging off telephone wires, outside of stores, and above almost every single government building. I couldn't help but laugh out loud at the unmistakable similarities between the American and Cuban flags. Not only did the two flags share the same color scheme, but also they were both made up of a combination of stars of stripes.

This rainbow of colors created by the numerous flying flags was complimented by the antique cars in a variety of shapes and sizes that lined the street in front of us. Some of the cars looked old and run down, barely being held together by their meek, remaining pieces of metal. Although their pale colors still shined ever so slightly, the combination of rusting doors and missing bumpers demonstrated years of hard service to their owners. And while they didn't look like much now, it was clear that they were the type of cars that were breathtaking in their prime. There were a few cars, however, that were in mint condition. With no such thing as car dealerships and T.V. commercials offering "2.5% APR financing through July," Cuban car owners were forced to keep

their cars in top shape in order to ensure that they would get maximum use out of them. My favorite of these cars was a beautiful purple and white 1955 Chrysler Imperial.

About thirty minutes later we arrived in front of a decaying beige concrete apartment building with a set of matching dilapidated Fords parked outside. We hiked the five flights of stairs to Rosa's apartment, each one of us lugging one of the suitcases full of various medicines that had provided us with our golden tickets into Cuba. With a warm and welcoming smile, which I found common among almost of Cubans, Rosa invited us in for some tea. We entered the small, two-bedroom apartment and followed Rosa outside to the patio, carefully navigating through the dolls and books scattered all over the floor.

"Please excuse the mess," she said in correct but heavily accented English. "The toys belong to my granddaughter."

As she poured the tea, Rosa told us that her daughter, son in-law, and 6 year old granddaughter also live in the apartment with her. In Cuba, she said, you cannot buy or sell houses. Each family lives in a house, which is technically owned by the government and never the occupants, and this house gets passed on from generation to generation.

Our family continued to visit with Rosa for nearly two hours, talking almost as though we were family instead of strangers. She thanked us sincerely for all the medicine we had brought with us and made sure we knew how much our little mitzvah (good deed in

Hebrew) affected their lives. She explained that, in Cuba, they only had access to old medicine; items such as inhalers and children's Tylenol did not exist unless brought in by outsiders. Also, all medicines sold in Cuba were only offered in limited quantities and were sometimes very difficult to find when necessary

After almost two-and-a-half hours and many cups of tea, we said goodbye to our new friend and continued with our day. Since we had now spent a large amount of time sitting, we decided to walk for a little while instead of taking the air-conditioned mini bus we had been driving around in before. As we walked down the crowded cobblestone alleyways, only accessible by foot, I was struck by the relentless amount of revolution propaganda that lined the streets.

We continued to wander the winding narrow streets for almost an hour, exploring the wide variety of sights, smells, and tastes that the gorgeous old city provided its many guests and inhabitants. When we finally turned the corner back on to one of the main streets we found ourselves facing an extremely large, palatial building with a plaque that read "Museo de la Revolución" (Museum of the Revolution). Tatiana said that she believed it was important for all visitors of Cuba to know the extensive history that comes along with this small island. The museum presents substantial tributes to Fidel and Ché, focusing mostly on their outstanding moral character and phenomenal leadership skills. It also offers a slightly skewed account of the 1959 revolution in which the unbelievably oppressive and corrupt government of Batista was overthrown by the brave and triumphant government of Castro. We roamed the many levels of the museum

for almost an hour, gazing at the many exhibits that covered the walls. While Tatiana and the rest of the family stood discussing an amusing caricature of Ronald Reagan, I found myself drawn to the fresh air streaming into the hot room through the large open window.

As I looked out of the second story window of the museum my eyes were met with a giant white star painted on the wall below me. Next to the star, in simple black lettering and underlined in red and blue, were the words "...la moral de la Revolución está tan alta como las estrellas...—Fidel" (...the moral of the Revolution is as high as the stars...—Fidel). I stared directly at these powerful words for almost a minute before extending my glance upwards to take in the rest of the scene before me. Above this mural was a crumbling rooftop on which a tired woman stood, hanging a set of orange sheets on a clothesline. Dressed in simple jean shorts and a bright yellow tank top, she worked solemnly next to piles of fallen brick and broken pipe, baking in the same hot afternoon sun that was undoubtedly at least partly to blame for her dark and worn looking skin. As I stood and watched, strangely mesmerized by this woman, I could not help but notice the unbelievable irony in the scene before me. Was this life everything the people had fought for in the Revolution? I somehow doubted it.

©

1 <http://www.thecajm.org/index.html>



Still Life no.1
April Ledbetter





High Class Style

Zapfino

High Class Style
Lindsey Hart



Sarah Plain and Tall

— **Dan Guerra**

i think the most depressing
sight in the world is
a Sarah Plain and Tall
who probably has a sweet
soul who dresses up but
really dresses down hikes
up skirt cakes face in
makeup and still is
as appealing as a glass
of low fat milk on a
sweltering day in

Death Valley



Untitled
Adrienne Ross





Early Morning
Kacie Draeger

The Part of Ourselves We're Afraid of

— Victor Inzunza

I found the devil in a fist;
in the shadows
of the part of ourselves we're afraid of,
in a shadow we belong to.

He hides in whispered lies that taunt our
lonely eardrums;
in roads that lead to strange tongues.

He hides in the twitches on the tips of fingers
that dance
on the outskirts of a trigger.

He hides where the haze and the gunfire swell the fear
of the things that starve for blood.

He hides in a paranoid flicker on the horizon,
as the moonlight stains our skin,
and the visions of night reflect on our
sleep-deprived eyes.

We get an artillery shell symphony for a lullaby
and a nightmare for a good night's rest.

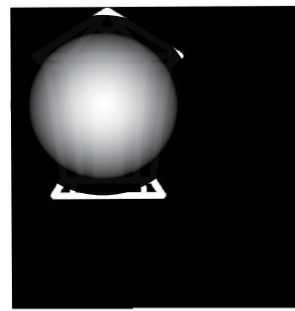
There's a price tag on my M-16.
There's a price tag on our lives.
There's a price tag on every breath.

Our chests are an Arlington graveyard;
where we bury the dead thing beneath the skin.





Dream Big
Darrell Chan



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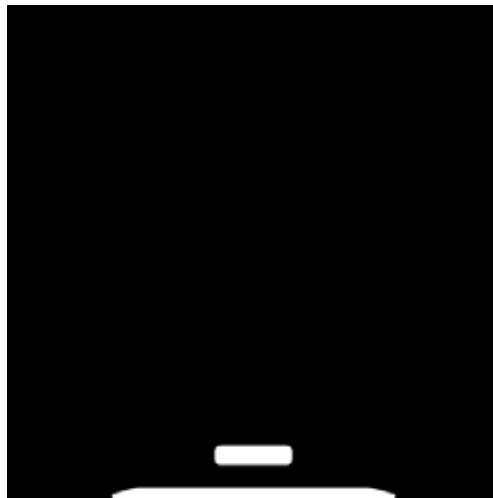
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